

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 166234

64
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TSPA, UR, US

SUBJECT: PETITION BY LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS ASKING AMBASSADOR
NOT TO ATTEND ASTP BLASTOFF

REF: MOSCOW 9797

1. IN CONNECTION WITH THE AMBASSADOR'S DEBRIEFING OF US
JOURNALISTS, IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING FROM NASA THAT NO
RPT NO SOVIET MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES--EITHER RESIDENT IN
US OR THOSE WHO HAVE COME FOR ASTP--HAVE APPLIED TO WITNESS
APOLLO LAUNCH AT CANAVERAL. ACCORDING TO NASA, 26 SOVIET
MEDIA REPS HAVE REGISTERED AT PRESS CENTER AT HOUSTON
MISSION CONTROL CENTER. THEY APPARENTLY WILL WATCH

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PAGE 02 STATE 166234

LAUNCHINGS AND DOCKING FROM HOUSTON. FYI. IN CONVERSATION

BETWEEN DEPTOFF AND SOVIET EMBASSY PRESS COUNSELOR KAMENEV
JULY 14, IT IS EVIDENT THAT SOVIETS DECIDED THEY WOULD NOT
TRY TO SEND THEIR MEDIA PEOPLE TO CANAVERAL IN ORDER TO
AVOID RECIPROCITY ISSUE AT LAUNCH SITES. END FYI.

2. A REUTERS REPORT FROM HOUSTON JULY 14 STATES THAT USG
WAS EXCLUDING SOVIET PRESS FROM CANAVERAL IN RETALIATION
FOR EXCLUSION OF US MEDIA REPS FROM BAIKONUR. WE PLAN TO
STATE THAT NO RPT NO SOVIET MEDIA REPS APPLIED TO WITNESS
APOLLO LAUNCH AT CANAVERAL, AND THAT 26 SOVIET MEDIA REPS
HAVE BEEN REGISTERED AT HOUSTON MISSION CONTROL CENTER.
HAD SOVIET MEDIA REQUESTED TO ATTEND APOLLO LAUNCH, THEIR
REQUESTS WOULD HAVE RECEIVED POSITIVE CONSIDERATION IN
ACCORDANCE WITH OUR POLICY OF OPENNESS AT LAUNCHES. FYI
WE ARE TREATING SOVIET MEDIA WHO HAVE COME ESPECIALLY FOR
ASTP AS NON-SPLEX, ASKING THAT THEY REGISTER PROPOSED
TRAVEL WITH DEPT. END FYI.

3. DEPARTMENT HAS NO OBJECTION, HOWEVER, IF AMBASSADOR
WISHES TO EXPRESS REGRET THAT NO US CORRESPONDENT COULD
ACCOMPANY HIM TO BAIKONUR. FOR PURPOSES OF COORDINATING
PUBLIC STATEMENT HERE, DEPT. WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING
WHETHER AMBASSADOR PLANS TO MAKE STATEMENT OF PERSONAL
REGRET. INGERSOLL

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